

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Claims 18-25 (canceled)

Claim 26 (new): A carpeted floor mat comprising

a non-woven carpet pile substrate, said substrate a) consisting essentially of polyester fibers, b) exhibiting a heat shrinkage rate of from about 2.0 to about 2.5%, and c) weighing between 3.5 and 4.5 ounces per square yard; wherein a pile material is tufted through said substrate to form a pile surface on one side of said substrate; and

a vulcanized expanded foam rubber backing sheet, said backing sheet exhibiting a heat shrinkage rate of from about 2.0 to about 2.5%; wherein said backing sheet is integrated to the non-tufted side of the carpet pile substrate; and, optionally, comprising solid vulcanized rubber reinforcement strips present along at least one of the borders of said backing sheet;

wherein said rubber backing sheet is vulcanized and integrated to said non-woven carpet pile substrate simultaneously; and

wherein said floor mat possesses suitable flexibility to be laundered on a regular basis in a standard industrial washing machine without appreciably damaging said mat or said machine.

Claim 27 (new): The floor mat of Claim 26 wherein at least one solid vulcanized rubber reinforcement strip is present and possesses a heat shrinkage factor of from about 2.0 to about 2.5%.

Claim 28 (new): The floor mat of Claim 26 wherein said carpet pile substrate weighs about 4.0 ounces per square yard.

Claim 29 (new): The floor mat of Claim 26 wherein silica is present within said backing sheet.

Claim 30 (new): The floor mat of Claim 26 wherein said backing sheet possesses a water absorption of below about 10%.

Claim 31 (new): A carpeted floor mat comprising

a non-woven carpet pile substrate, said substrate a) consisting essentially of polyester fibers, b) exhibiting a heat shrinkage rate of from about 2.0 to about 2.5%, and c) weighing between 3.5 and 4.5 ounces per square yard; wherein a pile material is tufted through said substrate to form a pile surface on one side of said substrate; and

a vulcanized expanded foam rubber backing sheet, said backing sheet possessing a modulus strength of greater than about 1,000 pounds per square inch; wherein said backing sheet is integrated to the non-tufted side of the carpet pile substrate; and, optionally, comprising solid vulcanized rubber reinforcement strips present along at least

one of the borders of said backing sheet, wherein said optional reinforcement strips

possess a modulus strength greater than about 1,000 pounds per square inch;

wherein said rubber backing sheet is vulcanized and integrated to said non-woven carpet pile substrate simultaneously; and

wherein said floor mat possesses suitable flexibility to be laundered on a regular basis in a standard industrial washing machine without appreciably damaging said mat or said machine.

Claim 32 (new): The floor mat of Claim 31 wherein said carpet pile substrate weighs about 4.0 ounces per square yard.

Claim 33 (new): The floor mat of Claim 31 wherein silica is present within said backing sheet.